Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Col. Ingersoll's latest inconsistency is recorded by a correspondent of the "Twentieth Century." It seems that the prohibition of prize-fighting in Minnesota has elicited from this enemy of liquor-traffic prohibition a strong expression of commendation. The correspondent naturally asks why prohibition, declared wrong and "unscientific" in its application to the liquor traffic, is right and wise when directed against prize-fighting. Perhaps Mr. Macdonald will enlighten us on this point.

In England it seems to be generally held that gambling is bad when indulged in by those who cannot afford to lose money, but that if the well-to-do gamble, there is nothing in the proceeding that calls for reprobation. American papers tell us that such a distinction cannot be entertained from the superior American point of view. Gambling is bad in all cases, because it is a species of robbery. But familiarity with the dictionary would be fatal to this superior American point of view. Robbery is the taking away by violence or oppression, and the question whether the gambler who wins gives a fair consideration for his prize is totally irrelevant.

At the recent meeting of the American Bar Association, a majority of the committee on remedial procedure, to which was referred the question of the advisability of changing the system of trial by jury, reported in favor of allowing a three-fourths vote to decide a verdict in civil cases. This fact is welcomed by some newspapers as satisfactory proof that "jury reform" is marching on. It is gratifying to note that such influential papers as the "Sun" oppose this sort of "reform," and that all agree that the wisdom of a majority vote would have to be unerringly established in civil cases before the question of applying it to criminal cases could be considered.

Is it not a little singular that the organs of the Farmers' Alliance religiously refrain from criticising, considering, or even mentioning the plan of free mutual banking brought to the attention of the Alliance leaders by Mr. Westrup? It surely cannot be beneath the dignity of the financial authorities of the Alliance to examine a plan which such papers as the New York "Nation" and "Sun" have deemed deserving of favorable notice. One cannot expel the suspicion that the leaders of the Alliance are primarily politicians and office seekers, and but secondarily financial reformers, and that the absence of politics from mutual banking makes that plan exceedingly distasteful to them.

"America" thinks that under the present condition of things the absence of great men from political life is a wholesome thing, because under ordinary circumstances great men in a republic are open to suspicion. The Philadelphia "Times," commenting on this, opines that it is more likely to be true that the absence of great men from public life throws suspicion upon the conditions responsible for their absence. It strikes me that the trouble is with "America's" conception of greatness. Such "great" men as Grant are doubtless open to suspicion; but men of great intelligence and learning are open to no suspicion save that of regarding the average law-maker as a contemptible and ignorant meddler.

The "New Nation" congratulates the Newcastle trades-union congress on the "step forward" it took in making the eight-hour law compulsory rather than permissive. This is consistent and natural. But I am surprised at the "New Nation's" attitude toward the attempts to legally restrict the practice of medicine in the interest of particular schools. It opposes such attempts on the ground that, "if the people can be trusted to choose doctors for their souls, they certainly can be allowed the liberty of selecting the doctors for their bodies." Cannot the people be allowed to determine for themselves the hours of labor, the rates of wages, and the prices of commodities? If they can take care of themselves when ill, they certainly can do so when they are well.

Mr Sidney Webb writes to the London "Times" that "women compositors who are not trade-unionists habitually receive in Edinburg and Paris, as well as in London, not only lower time wages than men, but also distinctly lower piece work rates for work of exactly equal quality." The moral drawn by Mr. Webb is naturally that workingwomen must act together if they would receive fair play. Now I am as anxious as Mr. Webb to secure fair play to workingwomen, and have no objection to their acting together, but a knowledge of the printing business (which Mr. Webb lacks) prevents me from concurring in his conclusion. As a rule, women printers' work is *not* of "exactly equal quality" with that of men, and even where it is, there are many other valid reasons for making them accept lower rates than those paid to men. If employers were forced to pay the same rates to women that they pay to men, they simply would not employ the former. To pretend that the average woman is as good, steady, and reliable a worker as the average man is to be either ignorant or reckless of the most patent facts.

Some Considerations by the Way.

"The Anti-Lottery law is an outrageous piece of tyranny."
BENJ. R. TUCKER, *in Liberty.*

A wishes to keep a lottery, and does.

B wishes to buy a lottery ticket, and does.

But here come C, D, E, F, and G:—"Gentlemen, lotteries are wrong. You have no right. You must quit."

Says A, "I claim the right to sell."

Says B, "I claim the right to buy."

Replies C (speaking for all the others), "We have made no contract with you recognizing the right. Wherefore have you it?"

Cries A, "It is my natural right as an individual. As the transaction is between B and myself alone, and concerns you no more than my buying of a cow would, by what reason do you interfere? How are you a party to the contract?"

Says C, "Your cow has wicked horns, and a bad temper. Our lives are placed in jeopardy."

"But," says B, "if I keep that cow to myself, on my own domain, and you keep away, you won't get hooked."

"Ah!" exclaims C, "but your example may persuade me to buy bad-tempered cows with horns; or, my boy may be led astray; therefore, we will have none of it *nowhere*—on your premises, or off; you have no premises for that matter, unless I contract that you have. B shall not buy. A shall not sell. The cow shall die."

Say A and B doggedly, "Who then are you, good gentlemen"—

C, D, E, F, and G, in chorus: "We are egoists, and that is right which we think is for our interest, advantage; that suits our taste, liking. And such shall be your law."

"You beastly tyrants!" shouts Tucker.

"Hey there,—brother egoist?"

And C, D, E, F, and G laugh loud and long.

A, B, C, D, E, F, and G are about to retire, but B. R. T. calls them back.

"I am not through with you, gentlemen. You think you have got me, I suppose, because I called a certain act 'tyranny,' and do not believe in natural rights, but hold that 'justice,' as a conception, exists, like truth, independent of contract. But justice as a binding fact exists only as we agree to adopt it. In other words, it is 'only a social deal.'"

C:—You say with us, do you not, that there is nothing binding in the conception of justice? We are under no obligation to give heed to the sentiment unless we have adopted it by contract or agreement?"

B. R. T.:—"Yes."

C:—"If I am under no obligation to deal justly, wherefore do you denounce me?"

B. R. T.:—"Nor do I. I only described your act. I said it was 'outrageous tyranny.' That is the sort of act I hold it to be."

C:—"But why *outrageous?*"

B. R. T.:—"It outrages and denies the law of equal freedom."

C:—"But there is *no such law*—no such *right*—unless it has been agreed on. 'I may understand what justice is, but I am not bound to do it.' I quote your own words. If I am not bound to do a thing, there is nothing 'outrageous' in my *not* doing it. To keep to the case in hand. There was no law of freedom for A and B to carry on the lottery business: no natural right. They have no right to breathe even unless I or others contract to let them. No, B. R. T.; you must cease using terms that imply obligation,—that attach odium to any one for whatever act. 'Nothing binds me to do aught or to refrain from doing, except the penalty of violation of contract or the disadvantage of an abandonment of contract.' Again I have quoted your own words."

B. R. T.:—"I have said nothing about moral obligation. A rattlesnake is not morally bound not to bite. There is odium attached to it, however; if I don't say its action is outrageous, I may say it is devilish, and I may go for that snake to exterminate it."

C:—"Yes, but to the snake you make no appeal, but at once apply physical force. This, in dealing with reasonable beings (such as men are supposed to be), you, as an Anarchist, decline to use. You reason with and persuade. Persuade to what? To your reasoning—based on what? On experience as to which is the better way? Ah! but your experience must be as convincing as fire that will straightway burn, or water that will drown. And then, you have no cause for getting excited if I choose, according to my own sweet will or taste, not to heed your admonition. I have not contracted that fire exists; therefore it does for me not exist."

B. R. T.:—"Try it, and find out for yourself, then."

C:—"I will. Ah! but it does exist, for I feel its bite. I agree then. A contract could have nothing to do with it."

A:—"Let me interpose. I also exist,—exist as a separate, independent individuality. By my nature I demand, need, must have, to be myself fully, liberty; the *right* to maintain myself in liberty and happiness so far as I can, without infringing on the same right in all other human beings. You deny me the right because there is no contract. But you may make the same mistake as you have made with the fire. My right does not depend on your recognition; you may indeed prevent me from exercising it, as you might put out fire with water; but under the law of equal freedom, which exists and continues to exist whether you subscribe to it or no, and which will eventually grind your opposition to powder, you are, by deeper and stronger cords than your will-force can destroy, bound by it."

B. R. T.:—"I deny God; therefore I deny all obligation which I have not contracted; and then all that binds me is fear or dislike of the consequences which might follow a refusal to abide by my contract."

B:—"Your God, then, is consequences."

B. R. T.:—"Yes, I might agree to that proposition."

S. H. MORSE.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

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Two Economic Views.

The August "Fortnightly Review" contained a notable article on "The Spirit of the New Economy" from the pen of one of the new economists, Prof. Smart. In the "North American Review" for October we find an article on "The Economic Man," contributed by the editor of the "Nation," E. L. Godkin, which, while not intended as a reply to Prof. Smart, very successfully exposes the fundamental fallacies of the new school and disposes of the claims made by its latest advocate.

In his criticisms and comments upon the method of the old school Prof. Smart is not original. Following Leslie, Ingram, and other critics, he points out the uncertain character of the postulates of the old economy, its dependence upon exploded theological and philosophical doctrines, and the inapplicability of its alleged laws to politico-economic conditions differing from those of England. The chief interest attaches to his attempt to interpret the general drift of the new economy which, he avers, is being written, and to his conception of the "safer foundation" upon which the whole fabric of political economy requires to be settled.

The new economy is not so timid and apologetic as the old economy is in the expositions of the latter-day champions. It boldly proclaims that it deals with things as they should be, and, far from being content with a mere analysis of existing factors, it affords industry the laws of its safe guidance.

> Its first principle is that political economy is not the science of wealth, but the science of man in relation to wealth, — a proposition given originally by Malthus. Thirty-five years ago Roscher struck the new key-note in the opening sentence of his system, "The starting-point and the object-point of our science is man." . . . . The great word of the new economy is not "wealth," but "labor." And labor is not that which can be bought or sold. It is man's life. . . .
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> What we are now called on to do is to write the political economy of a rich nation, whose wealth has all run to one end, and where the masses of the people are, if not so poor as they were, still far from what we might have expected. One thing the old economy could not take into its view, — that in Great Britain thousands of people are now starting life, whose first idea is not how to get more wealth, but how to make the best use of what they have inherited. For such men the highest vocation is open to which the urgent cry of the people can call them, that of employing labor in the true interests of the laborer.

In fine, the new economy is based on the "Platonic idea that the kingdom of man is not divided," and that man's work "must be consciously dominated by a special purpose, that purpose being the rise of *all* men to similar chances of *true life in labor*."

> Man should devote the whole of his life to work, should only look on his after-hours as the preparation for the life of the next day. But that "should" involves that the work of the day is something more than making an income. The working life is good, not because it is a life of toil, but because, and in the measure that, it is a life of congenial work, — work in which a man may realize his powers of body and mind to the utmost extent. And, to realize the social ideal of the new economy, this work must not be selfish, — even regarding a man's family and his friends as part of the self: it must be under the conscious domination of the idea that it is work faithfully done in the service of a community which lives by mutual services. . . . The old, individualistic conception of the business man as a selfish being making the most he can out of the public and giving them as little as he can, is out of date at a time when the old Christian conception of the solidarity of the human race is coming into prominence again, — if not from the side of Christianity, most certainly from all the substitutes proposed for it. The old production, for instance, was production for profit. It was said that the expectation of profit would lead to the cheapest and best production. We now see that there are two things which the working life must produce, — good commodities and good men. The production for profit ignored the latter of these, and must give place to a higher idea. . . . . The new economy refuses to consider the laborer as a machine for making wealth. It treats him as a spirit for whom all wealth exists.

Can anybody forbear to applaud and admire the *spirit* of this new economy, which seems to be on the most intimate terms with religion, ethics, philanthropy, generosity, love, and goodness? There is certainly nothing dismal, nothing harsh, nothing materialistic about the wonderful combination. But it is seriously to be apprehended that many will be apt to deny that there is anything *scientific* about this new economy. If political economy is the science of man in relation to wealth, then we surely need a new and independent science of wealth. And what shall we call that science? It is desirable that political economists should be good and true men; but their business as economists is not to inculcate truth and goodness, but to teach the principles and conditions of national wealth. Everything that affects national wealth should be considered by them; but their verdict should in all cases be expressed in economic terms. If free competition tends to produce poverty, insecurity, and stagnation, it is the business of the economists to pronounce free competition an economic evil. If the highest material prosperity can only be reached under Communism, the economists should inform us of the fact. To the economist nothing can be good or bad except as it tends to promote or impede the material well-being of the country. If the economist, from his point of view, recommends free trade, while the people choose to subordinate their economic interest to patriotic sentiments, the economist must condemn their course, though as a patriotic citizen he may rejoice in the sacrifice entailed by the attempt to "build up national industries" by means of protective tariffs. This distinction is generally ignored by the new economists. As Mr. Godkin well says:

> One can never tell, in listening to them, whether they are addressing us as scientific men or statesmen. Their air of authority is that of scientists, but the eager philanthropy of their utterances indicates that they are really would-be legislators. Their clothes are economical, but their talk is ethical. To take Roscher again as an example of the best-known and most moderate of them, one finds that what he has added to the work of the older economists, besides the illustrations supplied by an enormous erudition, consists mainly of theology and metaphysics. The new schools profess to know far more about the will of God, and about duty and the moral sources of happiness, and the ethical foundations of the State, than the older economists; but they have not contributed anything of practical importance to our knowledge of the laws of value, of production, or of exchange, as extracted from the mind of the producer and purchaser. The test of science is that it enables one to predict consequences. Until our researches have enabled us to foresee exactly what will happen if something else happens, although we may have discovered valuable and interesting facts, we have not discovered a law. Their great objection to the doctrine of *laissez faire* — that it permits a considerable amount of cruelty, oppression, and suffering, and that, in spite of its teachings, poverty exists on a great scale among the laboring classes — is an ethical or political, not a scientific, objection. It is simply saying to the rich what "the Society for the Abolition of Poverty" says — that they are cruel or unjust. It does not suggest any economical mode, in the scientific sense of the term, for improving the condition of the poor.
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> In short, the new school of economists are rather politicians, using the word in its good sense, than scientific men. What mainly occupies them is legislation for taking away money from capitalists and distributing it among laborers. The earlier school may have paid too much attention to the problem of production. The later ones can hardly be said to pay any attention at all to production. With the effect of their plans on production — that is, on the dividend which the earth yields every year to the labor of its inhabitants — they hardly seem to concern themselves. To talk of their championship of the working classes as being in any sense scientific would be an abuse of language.

In urging legislative and philanthropic measures for the relief of the laborer the new economists never trouble themselves about their economic value. What they regard as ethically right or meritorious they do not hesitate, without examination, to demand of the legislator and the public. Because their feelings are noble and their intentions excellent, they imagine themselves to be better economists than those who reason calmly and soberly and fail to give eloquent expression to their deep interest in the poorer classes. They do not and cannot prove that this or that piece of legislative action is certain to advance the economic condition of the people; they demand the legislation because they conceive it to be just and right to protect the people in this or that way. In most instances they are wrong in every sense and from every point of view; whereas, did they confine themselves to the economic aspect of the questions, they might be useful in at least one capacity. The vague, sentimental talk of faithful service to the community, etc., would be harmless did it not lead to the advocacy of government monopoly. Those who indulge in the contemplation of men "subordinating themselves to the realization of a common life" free from "competition or scramble or survival of the fittest" generally end by calling in the brutal agency of despotic government. As Mr. Godkin says:

> When I read the accounts given by the young lions of the historical school of the glorious future which awaits us as soon as we get the proper amount of State interference with our private concerns for the benefit of the masses, and remember that in New York "the State" consists of the Albany Legislature under the guidance of Governor Hill, and in New York city of the little Tammany junta known as "the Big Four," I confess I am lost in amazement. I ask myself, How can anybody who attacks the old school with such vigor for its indifference to the facts of daily life be so completely oblivious of that most patent fact, that the capacity of the State for interfering with people profitably has not grown in anything like the same ratio as the popular intelligence, and that there is nothing in which modern democracy is showing itself so deficient as in the provision of inspecting machinery — that is, in securing the faithful execution of its plans for the promotion of popular comfort?

It is evident that little good will come from the efforts of the new economists with their small economics and less scientific understanding. They have excellent intentions, but they do not know what the sins and defects of the old school were, and how to reform their science. The new economists must continue to study the facts; they are not ready for generalizations. When they get ready, they will find themselves more individualistic than the old school. V. Y.

Explanatory and Retrospective.

In controversy, to take my opponent's statements in the strongest and best possible sense is my constant aim and endeavor. (I am sorry that I cannot always credit Mr. Tucker with this aim or tendency; and I shall show that his remark about the community of method between myself and smart Alecks was an unjustifiable and gratuitous insult.) To this I am impelled not alone by regard for truth and love of justice, but by considerations of expediency as well. Hence when I resolved to meet Mr. Tucker's objection to the Spencerian use of the term "rights," I fully appreciated the importance of a correct understanding of his position. As he wrote his protest with the dictionary definitions before his eyes, so did I pen my reply with the same dictionary's light to guide me. Mr. Tucker, said I to myself, objects to Spencer's novel use of the term rights, because to him and to other people it conveys the idea of a high prerogative superior to and independent of contract. Now, what does he mean by "prerogative"? A reference to the dictionary disclosed the existence of *two* principal de-

finitions. One was "prior and indefeasible right," or "fundamental and essential possession"; and the other was "high exclusive privilege." Upon reflection, I concluded that the second definition was the proper one to apply to Mr. Tucker's expression. Need I give the reasons for this conclusion? They are perfectly obvious. One, however, may be stated. Surely, I thought, Mr. Tucker is not so illogical as to advance as an *objection* to the use of the term rights that fact which Spencer regards as the very ground and justification for the use of it. Spencer believes that rights *are* essential and fundamental possessions with which contract has nothing whatever to do, and *therefore* he recommends the term which conveys the idea of fundamental and essential possession,—of something superior to and independent of contract. And since Mr. Tucker did not, in his comment, express any dissent from Spencer's philosophy, I inferred that his objection to the term proceeded from the definition of prerogative as exclusive privilege. Now we know that Mr. Tucker does dissent from the Spencerian philosophy; but his original paragraph did not clearly reveal this fact. Now we know that Mr. Tucker's objection to the use of the term rights naturally and logically flows from his general philosophy, which is totally at variance with that of Spencer; but I did not possess this knowledge when I studied Mr. Tucker's criticism of the use of the term rights. To some extent I am blamable, perhaps; but I submit that Mr. Tucker's improper distribution of emphasis was calculated to mislead. (I may add that, to my knowledge, at least three of Liberty's Boston readers have taken Mr. Tucker's expression in my sense, and that one has actually expressed surprise at Mr. Tucker's objection, on the ground that right does not convey the idea of *privilege*.) I wished to take Mr. Tucker's objection in its strongest sense, and the definition of prerogative as exclusive privilege certainly does yield a very strong objection to any term conveying the idea of a prerogative. Behold the cruel irony of fate! My anxiety to be fair has landed me in the camp of the "smart Alecks."

But now, at any rate, the case is clear. Mr. Tucker admits, I take it, that in the Spencerian philosophy the term rights has a proper place, but he objects to the use of it by those who repudiate that philosophy. He is eminently right. In *his* philosophy the term rights has no place. As I accept the Spencerian philosophy, I find the term rights indispensable in *my* expositions.

Mr. Tucker says it is not his intention to renew the controversy on the subject of rights and obligations to any large extent. Very well; I am perfectly willing to drop the matter. It is not true, however, that I now find mental rest in the position which Mr. Babcock defended in 1887. My present position is as different from his as it is different from the one which I then advocated with so much assurance. I find mental rest in the Spencerian ethical philosophy, and still call myself a rational egoist, while insisting upon the important distinction between egoistic feelings and altruistic feelings. Mr. Babcock may have modified his views and brought them into harmony with ethical and sociological science. But in 1887 he was unscientific and unphilosophical. And so was I. We were opposed to each other, but we were both wrong. At that time I had an extremely inadequate conception of the great fact of Evolution,—of evolution in philosophy, in feelings, in habits, in scientific terminology, in reform. Ethically and philosophically I was a revolutionist, and sought to do, in the sphere in which I operated, that which the revolutionary reformers of the Most type seek to accomplish in the political, social, and economic spheres. I was as blind to the complexity of ethical questions as the revolutionary Communists are to the complexity of economic relations. My method was metaphysical, and I did not realize that dogmas and assumptions cannot be successfully combatted by counter-dogmas and counter-assumptions. I tried to evolve a social order out of my inner consciousness, with nothing better for a basis than the *utterly false* assumption that enlightened selfishness prompts men to observe "the laws of justice." "The Reasons Why" would be excellent did they correspond with the *facts* of life and development. But they do not, and it is the same with the rest of the half-truths which I then entertained, and of which I should now be ashamed were it not for the fact that Mr. Tucker, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Pentecost, Mr. Robinson, and others still cling to them. As it is, my arguments in that "memorable controversy" amuse me. They were good enough for Mr. Babcock's weak case, but that is saying very little. The dicta and affirmations in the passages to which Mr. Tucker gave the emphasis of small capitals I have no hesitation in declaring to be monstrously absurd and miserably nonsensical. My thought and style, Mr. Tucker is kind enough to say, were then marvelously clear. Clear, yes; but marvelously wrong were the thoughts. Rousseau's "Social Contract" is famous for the lucidity and clearness of its style; but what about his ideas and philosophy? A clear idea, said Burke, is another name for a little idea. That which to Mr. Tucker appears to be retrogression I know to be progression and growth, and never am I so well pleased with myself—never do I congratulate myself so heartily—as when I read the productions of those who still hold the opinions which deeper thought and greater familiarity with the facts and factors of evolution have taught me to discard as superficial.

One word more. "Just as it is only necessary," says Mr. Tucker, "in order to controvert Mr. Spencer's latter-day views of the limits of the State, to print side by side with them his old chapter on 'The Right of the Individual to Ignore the State,' so, to overthrow the Mr. Yarros of today, it is only necessary to confront him with the Mr. Yarros of 1887." This proposition needs to be amended. In order to combat Mr. Spencer's present views successfully it is necessary to refute his new arguments (if any are advanced) or to show that the arguments in favor of the original view have not been met. Where there is a question of new evidence, the "deadly parallel column" is impotent and worthless. Whenever I criticize Mr. Spencer's present Archistic views I attempt to show that the new evidence upon which he bases his modified judgment does not alter the original situation. To overthrow my present position it is not enough to print extracts from former articles. The new evidence—of which there is an overwhelming amount—has to be examined. It is open to Mr. Tucker to say that he knows what the new evidence is and that he finds it valueless; but it is open to me to make the rejoinder that, like Mr. Pentecost, with whom I have recently conducted a long controversy on the subject of rights and obligations, he is too prejudiced to appreciate the strength of the new evidence.

V. Y.

I shall answer the first half of Mr. Yarros's explanatory article by a simple narration of facts. These facts will show sufficiently whether I insulted Mr. Yarros unjustifiably and gratuitously, and against which of us, if against either, the charge of dishonesty in discussion, preferred parenthetically by Mr. Yarros against me, may properly be brought.

In No. 194 of Liberty, which contained the first of that admirable series of articles on Spencer's "Justice" which Mr. Yarros lately wrote for these columns,—articles unequalled, on the whole, for ability and insight by any reviewer on this side of the water or the other,—he gave the editorial sanction to a use of the word rights which I did not approve. To guard against misunderstanding of my position, I wrote a paragraph for the same issue of the paper, and sent it to my composing-room, which Mr. Yarros superintends, and which is five miles distant from my office. On visiting the composing-room, a day or two later, I was met by a suggestion from Mr. Yarros that I should either omit or alter my paragraph, inasmuch as it seemed to him to attribute to Spencer the view that rights are the result of contract. I answered that my paragraph did not attribute to Mr. Spencer anything of the kind, and *I told Mr. Yarros distinctly that I was not then discussing the question whether Spencer's use of the word rights was justifiable from his (Spencer's) standpoint, but whether this use was justifiable from my own standpoint, I having occasion to discuss this latter point because Spencer's use of the word had been put in my mouth by Mr. Yarros's editorial sanction thereof. Furthermore, I then and there, to please Mr. Yarros, inserted a clause in my paragraph which made it clearer than before that I was not attributing my views to Spencer,* and in this amended form the paragraph appeared in No. 194. Here it should be noted and carefully remembered that this conversation, which was of Mr. Yarros's own seeking, must have been looked upon by him as of some importance and must have left an impression on his mind. In No. 197, three weeks later, appeared the letter from Mr. Simpson called out by my paragraph, accompanied by my comments. In these comments I again emphasized the fact that the language of my paragraph excluded any implication that I agree with Spencer's position. This, one would think, should have tended to deepen the impression made on Mr. Yarros's mind by our conversation. And in the same article I expressly distinguished a "prerogative superior to contract" from a "privilege resulting from contract." It was clear that I meant to contrast prerogative with privilege, because, if I had desired to contrast simply the phrases "superior to" and "resulting from," I should have laid the emphasis on these exclusively by using the word prerogative in both clauses. Notwithstanding this, in No. 198 Mr. Yarros, commenting on my declaration that "the word right, except in the strictly legal sense, conveys the idea of a high prerogative independent of contract and superior to it," interpreted the word prerogative as meaning privilege (not even hinting at any other possible definition), and thereby convicted me, supposing the interpretation correct, of uttering ridiculous nonsense. I answered that the dictionary also defined prerogative as "prior and indefeasible right," in which sense I used the word, and I characterized the attempt of Mr. Yarros to make it appear otherwise as one of those tricks of controversy to which "smart Alecks" usually resort. Against this remark Mr. Yarros defends himself in the present issue by saying that he supposed me to mean privilege *because he thought I was criticising Spencer's use of the term rights from a standpoint of agreement with Spencer's philosophy.* When I received the proof-sheet of Mr. Yarros's article stating this, I sent a note to Mr. Yarros asking him if he had forgotten our conversation in the printing-office, and whether a reminder of it inspired him with any desire to change his article in the proof. He replied promptly that, *when he wrote the previous article in No. 198, he had forgotten the conversation,* and that everything in his present article, regarding the dictionary, etc., is absolutely true.

Man is a credulous animal, we know; but I hope that Mr. Yarros realizes that he is now subjecting credulity to a strain very nearly approaching the point of utmost tension. *Forgotten the conversation!* So be it, then. I have only to say that, if my memory would serve me as conveniently in getting out of difficulties as Mr. Yarros's memory serves him, perhaps I might be as rash as Mr. Yarros in rushing into them.

It is at least refreshing, if not entirely agreeable, to turn from these devious and dubitable ways to the directness with which Mr. Yarros repudiates his past. True, the action comes a little late. It would have been better if he had not waited for it to be forced upon him by a confrontation with his old articles in black and white. It would have been fairer if he had not misled his comrades by professing a harmony between views which he now admits to be irreconcilable. His adhesion to new views without renunciation of the old has been too much after the fashion of Mr. Pentecost. Indeed, Mr. Pentecost has the advantage of him; for, while Mr. Pentecost makes no formal announcements or acknowledgments, his changes are abrupt, frank, and decisive, concealed by no effort to blend the old with the new.

But better late than never. At least there is no shuffling now. The plunge is direct, though into the dark. Yes, into the dark, unless I am blind. For to me there is no light in his direction. When he says that our doctrines are revolutionary and metaphysical, I don't know at all what he means, and I don't think he knows himself. In fact, he sneers at light, at lucidity, at clearness. A clear idea, he says after Burke, is a little idea. But look at the logic of this view. All ideas are, of course, either clear or confused; but every clear idea is a little idea; then, by logical necessity, all ideas, including those now held by Mr. Yarros, are either little or confused or both. There is no denying the conclusion, but it shows the utter absurdity of the position from which it follows. And yet it is such absurdity that fills Mr. Yarros with pleasure at his present and amusement at his past. He should remember that he was as top-lofty then from the standpoint which amuses him now, as he is now from the standpoint which amused him then. It will become him hereafter to be a very modest man. But he will not be. Pride not only goeth before a fall, but continueth after it.

It dawns on me at this point that I have given Mr. Yarros too much credit. There is a bit of a shuffle, after all. He still calls himself a "rational egoist." But I do not consider him an egoist at all. He repudiates, as monstrous nonsense, his old assertion that, "apart from self-interest, there is absolutely nothing to induce an individual to show any deference for the rules of conduct which others adopt for themselves." His present position, then, is that some such inducement, other than self-interest, exists. This inducement he calls an obligation and says that it is binding,—that is, controlling. If it is controlling, then it would compel deference for common standards, even if self-interest should point in the other direction; and where self-interest is violated, there is no egoism, rational or otherwise.

The sudden change in Mr. Yarros comes to me as no surprise. Not, as he may think, because I have seen special signs of its approach, but, as he will be astonished to hear, because of my general belief in his men-

tal instability,—a belief which I have long held, have often expressed, and have heard expressed by other comrades who know him well, both in this and other cities. We always know (and often with great clearness) where Mr. Yarros stands today, but we never feel quite sure where he will stand tomorrow. He is a great advocate, but not an independent thinker. His reading makes a great impression on him, but the impressions thus received are fleeting. However strong they may be, they are effaced, or very liable to be effaced, by others similarly received. His wonderful grasp is only equalled by his wonderful let-go. He has let go his hold on egoism; how long before he will abandon Anarchism? No one can tell; we can only hope. Between Yarros Archical and Yarros illogical, we prefer Yarros illogical. T.

Mr. Morse, in his article in this number, makes a valid criticism when he complains of the inconsistency between my denunciatory language and my egoistic philosophy. An egoist cannot consistently use language that implies blame. But mine is a case where it is necessary to be inconsistent, and where the harm of the inconsistency is very much lessened by the acknowledgment of it. Mr. Morse is wrong, however, in saying that an egoist may not use the language of odium. Odium differs essentially from blame. I do not blame the rattlesnake, but I loathe it, and I must have some way of vigorously expressing my loathing. If in doing so I seem to attach blame, it is largely the fault of the English language. It is the inadequacy of the language that necessitates my inconsistency. Mr. Morse does well to call attention to the inconsistency, because this helps to make my position clear. I do not see, however, that he offers any arguments against egoism that have not been answered again and again. His conclusion that my God is consequences I accept if he means by God simply that for which I have supreme regard. To have supreme regard for anything but consequences would seem to me supreme folly.

No Misrepresentation.

[Galveston News.]

A sprightly style is a high recommendation, especially in summer, but sprightliness purchased at the expense of truth is very questionable outside of fish stories. The Cleveland "World" makes the mistake of choosing the serious subject of monetary reform for a cabinet performance in which the editorial juggler is tied but plays on the banjo and hurls the instrument through the hole at the top, besides exhibiting himself in various constrained attitudes. The Cleveland "World" has either not taken the trouble to read carefully and understand Mr. A. B. Westrup's pamphlet on free trade in banking, or else it is guilty of something worse than neglect. There are inducements and rewards to be had from monopoly by those who are willing to use the press in distorting, misrepresenting, and prejudicing the public mind against any writings which contain the germs of a saving reform. A single falsehood taken on trust has caused many a generation to dismiss that which was its highest interest to know, and the lie has been deliberate. Only one paragraph need be quoted from the "World's" article to state the utter falsehood of its pretended account of free banking. It says: "A member of this banking house can estimate his own property at his own price and have notes issued by the bank to that amount." It is not so. That would be preposterous, and no writer advocating free banking has given any ground for the charge of such absurdity. An appraiser must in all cases certify that the property is worth more than the money sought to be borrowed upon it as security. This was provided for by Proudhon and by Greene, Warren, Spooner, and others who preceded Mr. Westrup many years in the advocacy of a great truth which is just now coming into something like appreciation, chiefly through the course of events, and Mr. Westrup of course also expects to have a strict valuation of property precedent to a loan. The Cleveland "World" concludes:

We shall be surprised if the Alliance brethren do not accept this scheme. It has all the good points of their platforms and plans, and eliminates some of the bad features. It will satisfy the Pefferian cry that is thrown out upon the breeze for "more money, cheaper money," and will test the question once for all as to whether land is a good security for the issuance of unlimited paper money with a large fiat feature in it.

The last line contains an atrocious misstatement, for there is no fiat feature whatever in the plan advocated by Mr. Westrup in his two pamphlets and his paper, the Chicago "Auditor." The "World" is correct in saying that it is worthy the attention of the Alliance. It is worthy the attention of everybody; it would not tax anybody; it would not force currency upon anybody; it would not vary the obligation of any contract. It would simply allow parties to organize responsible banks and supply their own need under adequate security, and it would not trouble the government with any functions either in warehousing or banking. By and by, perhaps, Democratic leaders will awake to a realization of the truth that free banking is the "something better" with which they might have averted the sub-treasury plan and the People's Party, had they gained a just estimate of the financial distress which presses for some relief, arbitrary or not, and of the real value, justice, simplicity, and efficacy of free banking.

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